

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES
CITY OF MILPITAS
SISTER CITIES COMMISSION**

Minutes: Special Meeting of Sister Cities Commission (SCC)
Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 1, 2003
Place of Meeting: Milpitas City Hall, 455 E. Calaveras Blvd., Finance Conference Room

I. Roll Chair Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners/Alternates Present: Arthur, Garcia, Grilli, Lind, Mateo, Swiger
Commissioners/Alternates Absent: Chahal, Downey, Iringan
Mayor, City of Milpitas Present: Jose Esteves
City Council Liaison Absent: Bob Livengood
MUSD Liaison Present: Mike Mendizabal

II. Alternates Alternate Mateo was seated.

III. Agenda **MOTION** to approve the October 1, 2003, agenda.

M/S: Swiger/Lind Ayes: All

IV. Announcements/Correspondence

Mayor Esteves welcomed the Tsukuba International Relations Committee (IRC) on behalf of the City of Milpitas and its citizens. He stated that he looked forward to a continued friendship and productive cultural exchange.

Mr. Aizawa with IRC provided this statement as Mr. Ohsaka interpreted: Last November Kukizaki merged with Tsukuba and the IRC joined Tsukuba members. Although their name has changed, they would like to continue a good friendship with Milpitas. He read a greeting letter from the Mayor of Tsukuba and presented a gift to Mayor Esteves.

Mr. Mendizabel spoke on behalf of the Milpitas Unified School District (MUSD) by welcoming the Tsukuba delegation. He stated that they are looking forward to sending students to Tsukuba next summer.

Introductions followed, noting these representatives:

Mr. Harehiko Nomura, Vice President, Tsukuba International Relations Committee
Mr. Tokio Ohsaka, Director, Tsukuba International Relations Committee
Mr. Hisashi Aizawa, Director, Tsukuba International Relations Committee
Ms. Mayo Fuura, Director, Tsukuba International Relations Committee
Ms. Nami Iitsuka, Staff Member, Tsukuba International Relations Division

VII. Citizen's Forum

No comments.

VIII. New Business

1. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, MILPITAS/TSUKUBA MOU, AUG. 2003 – AUG. 2004

Chair Garcia opened the discussion by stating that she requested this official meeting to meet with the IRC representatives and Tsukuba City staff. A tour of City Hall was conducted during the day for the IRC.

Mr. Ohska distributed a handout about Tsukuba, which included their history and statistics. He is a physicist and was invited to work in Tsukuba. He also distributed pictures and maps of the area. He noted that Tsukuba is different than Kukizaki and other cities in Japan because of how it was established. In 1966 the government made a decision to have a new city for researchers and scholars and created Tsukuba. The government then purchased huge areas of farmland and over forty institutions were created which are mostly government and universities. Tsukuba does not have any industries. The government employees in Tsukuba are usually assigned there for one to three years, with assignments rotating to different locations.

Mr. Ohska stated that they did not bring a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Chair Garcia noted, with respect to the Tsukuba delegation, that Milpitas has procedures and guidelines. In order to have visits to other cities, it requires a signed MOU. When she approached Tsukuba initially, she had received word that they would approve the MOU. The MOU was based upon that agreement between Milpitas and Tsukuba.

Mr. Ohska stated that Tsukuba understood this would be a temporary extension. The next MOU should be based on the best way of proceeding between Tsukuba and Milpitas. Tsukuba has other sister city relationships in the United States and requests specific conditions before signing an MOU.

Chair Garcia stated that the commission is pleased to work with the IRC. The commission recognizes and values the difference of procedures and guidelines between the two cities, and is eager to discover with IRC the best way to proceed. Milpitas had a very good student and adult exchange with Kukizaki. Milpitas is more industry oriented as opposed to research, however, there can have valuable adult and business exchanges as well. Again, the commission expresses every willingness to work with Tsukuba to continue the relationship.

Vice Chair Arthur inquired if Tsukuba intends to use the same guidelines it has with the City of Irvine, Tsukuba's other sister city.

Mr. Ohska replied no, however, the IRC desires to set specific boundaries. For instance, Japanese homes tend to be very small and it can difficult to find homes for students.

Grilli asked if the number of students needed to be reduced.

Ms. Iitsuka, Tsukuba staff representative, replied yes and asked if the number could be reduced to eight total.

Swiger suggested four boys and four girls.

Vice Chair Arthur noted that it is essential to send at least two adults as escorts for eight students.

Lind asked about the number of adults.

Ms. Iitsuka replied that up to three adults would be acceptable.

Chair Garcia noted that volunteers in Milpitas cover all of the travel costs and hosting of students. Volunteers financially and physically run the program. She asked if this is an issue.

Mr. Ohska stated that since exchanges are officially supported by the City of Milpitas, then it is not an issue.

Mendizabal stated that the program is run on a volunteer basis, however, the commission is the City's official governing body. The Milpitas City Council officially appoints commissioners and reviews its actions.

Vice Chair Arthur asked if the citizen escort from the airport to Milpitas needs to be an official entourage.

Mr. Ohska replied that it did not need to be an official entourage.

Grilli noted that the City would appoint any escorts so it is viewed as being official. He reiterated that number of students could be adjusted. The city does have a formally funded program to consider and provide funding for certain portions of the program, such as gifts and activities, as well as support from city staff. However, it is expected that travel, lodging and personal expenses incurred for students and adults be borne by those individuals. That cannot change.

Mr. Nomura noted the need for a lecture and training for students before the visits.

Chair Garcia noted that there is a cultural training program in place.

Swiger stated that stricter qualifications might be needed for students because of the reduction.

Chair Garcia noted that a subcommittee of the commission could work further on the selection process.

Swiger noted that in the past, Kukizaki provided transportation from the airport to the City, however, that expense is no longer necessary and the students can pay their own transportation costs.

Grilli noted that the only reason that occurred is because Kukizaki owned transportation that was available to provide such services.

Mr. Nomura stated that he understood the previous relationship between Kukizaki and Milpitas. In terms of the students, he asked if Tsukuba visitors could be picked up at the airport.

Arthur replied yes, host families could be made responsible for meeting and transportation, as in the past, except for special trips.

Chair Garcia noted that the changes would include reducing the number of students to eight and the number of adults to three. She also suggested a two-year agreement. The commission concurred. Tentative changes to the MOU were then proposed and reviewed with all present.

Chair Garcia directed Milpitas staff to reformat a draft MOU for review at the October 23 meeting. Purpose is to email this to Tsukuba staff and IRC for governmental review, comments on any requested changes, and final approval from both Tsukuba and Milpitas City Council.

MOTION to recommend that the Milpitas City Council withdraw the current MOU.

M/S: Grilli/Lind Ayes: All

MOTION to recommend an amended MOU to the Milpitas City Council with a length of two years pending approval from Tsukuba City officials.

M/S: Grilli/Lind Ayes: All

IX. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

No report.

XII. Adjournment

No further business was discussed with the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, October 23, 2003.

M/S Grilli/Lind Ayes: All

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Cuciz
Recording Secretary

Leslie Stobbe
Staff Liaison